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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-fourth session of the Commission/ fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
6-10 April 1988

Item 6 of the provisional agenda**

LC/NAIROBI

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF CIVIL AVIATION

Yaoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire
6-7 October 1988

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* E/ECA/TPCW.10/1.
** E/ECA/CM.15/1.

A. ORGANIZATION

1. The Special Conference of African Ministers of Civil Aviation was held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, on 5 and 7 October 1988.

B. ATTENDANCE

2. Representatives of the following member States of the Economic Commission for Africa participated in the meeting: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Côte-d'Ivoire, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire and Zimbabwe.

3. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the following United Nations bodies and African intergovernmental organizations: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Organization of African Unity (OAU), African Airlines Association (AFRAA), l'Agence pour la sécurité de la navigation aérienne en Afrique et Madagascar (ASECNA), African Development Bank (ADB), African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Multinational Civil Aviation Training Centre (CESAC), Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC) and Niger River Union (NRU).

4. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) participated in the meeting as observers.

C. OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. In his statement, the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity stressed the importance of the Special Conference which was being held in Yamoussoukro in view of the difficulties and challenges being faced by African airlines. These challenges included the deregulation of the air transport industry in the USA, liberalization in Europe, the biased use of computerized reservation systems by the airlines which owned them and aircraft noise restrictions which affected the majority of aircraft owned by African airlines.

6. He pointed out that there were aeronautical policy guidelines embodied in the Lagos Plan of Action and the Declaration of General Policy in the field of Civil Aviation as well as in the numerous resolutions adopted in other African fora. However, in the face of the new challenges, Africa needed new and concerted policies to counter them. Thus, it was imperative that African airlines, which were financially weak, should intensify their co-operation towards integration and the eventual formation of multinational airlines based either on subregional groupings, economic groupings or groupings based on affinity. Integration also offered the advantages of economies of scale and a stronger bargaining position vis-à-vis other countries which enjoy more liberal traffic rights in Africa. This was particularly so in

view of the effects of deregulation and liberalization, which have led to the emergence of mega airlines in the USA and mergers in Europe.

7. Finally, he appealed to African Governments to ensure that their aeronautical policies were translated into concrete action and that they were backed by full commitment to their implementation.

8. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ECA paid tribute on behalf of everyone present to the President of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Felix Houphouet-Boigny, whose dedication to the economic integration of Africa was legendary. He reminded the Ministers that not only was President Houphouet-Boigny one of the founding fathers of nearly all the major economic co-operation institutions in West Africa and in Africa as a whole, he had also hardly missed the summit of any major economic integration institution. He therefore thanked the President, his Government and the people of Cote d'Ivoire for playing host to a meeting whose outcome might have far-reaching consequences for air transport in Africa by leading to great co-operation, harmonization and eventual integration.

9. The Executive Secretary reminded the conference that the decision to convene it had been taken during the sixth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning in Kinshasa in March 1988. The idea at the time had been that the meeting would be held in 1989 but due to the urgency of the issues involved, the date had been advanced.

10. The urgency that had necessitated the advancing of the date of the meeting was the challenge facing African air transport, occasioned by policies emanating from the United States of America and Europe. One of these policies, that of the deregulation of the airline industry, had its origin in America but was spreading to Europe. It had had significant effects on international air transport and [illegible] these effects would begin to be felt in Africa because of the close ties between Europe and Africa in matters of air transport. Some of the consequences of deregulation had been the merging of airlines leading to the collapse of small airlines, the lowering of tariffs and hence an unprecedented increase in traffic.

11. The Executive Secretary pointed out that, had the effects of American deregulation been confined to that country, they would not have been cause for alarm. However, because of the interdependence of air transport, American deregulation had had repercussions in Europe and Europe's contemplated action to liberalize its air transport would have consequences for Africa. It was reasonable to expect that these consequences would be the same as those of American deregulation had been for Europe because of Africa's close ties with Europe. It would be foolhardy for Africa to wait as long as Europe did before responding to the challenge of American deregulation.

12. Two problems that African airlines had to contend with were those posed by the computerized reservation systems (CRS) and by the application of aircraft noise standards. The problem associated with CRS was its bias in displaying information about flights to the advantage of the airline that owned it and to the disadvantage of non-owner airlines. As for noise, the

application of the standards meant that African aircraft were barred from operating into European airports as a great majority of them did not meet the standards.

13. Since the cost of replacing the obsolete aircraft with those meeting the standard was so high, most African airlines, with their notorious record of loss making, could not afford it and the ownership of a CRS was prohibitive, even for the large European airlines, the only salvation for African airlines lay in integrating their airlines to form larger and more competitive ones. The choice lay between integration and extinction.

14. The Executive Secretary warned that the times have changed and long-held notions such as the sanctity of sovereignty needed to be shed to save African airlines from extinction.

15. The draft Declaration prepared by the Meeting of Experts was in the same spirit. In addition, the experts had recommended a mechanism for the follow-up and implementation of the decisions contained in the Declaration. He concluded by commending both the Declaration and the recommended mechanism to the Ministers for approval. He hoped that the Ministers would grasp the nettle and chart a new course for African air transport.

16. Next to take the floor was Professor Kalonga Mbikayi, Commissaire d'Etat for Transport and Communications of Zaire and current Chairman of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning. He paid glowing tribute to President Felix Houphouet-Boigny who, in accepting to host this meeting, had once again shown the firm determination of Côte d'Ivoire to make every effort to work towards the consolidation of African unity.

17. He recalled that the sixth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning, held in Kinshasa in March 1988, was characterized by two important resolutions, namely the proclamation of a second decade for transport and communications in Africa and the convening of a Special Conference of African Ministers of Civil Aviation.

18. In this regard, he welcomed the fact that the conference had been held in a shorter time than the date that was set in Kinshasa.

19. He also noted that to promote any co-operation initiatives and to obtain the desired groupings of airlines and their merging into subregional mega airlines, it was necessary to transcend individualism and to set up supranational aeronautical administrations, by subregions, that would implement common polcies both within and outside the African subregions.

20. To enable Africa to rapidly find the means to act, the Minister requested that the carrying out of a study and the creation of an African financing and leasing company should be encouraged.

21. Finally, to cope with the various changes occurring in international air transport, he expressed the desire that this meeting would decide on

clear common positions and would set up a consistent follow-up mechanism on which the very survival of air transport depended.

22. He concluded his speech by wishing a resounding success to the meeting.

23. On behalf of the Mayor of Yamoussoukro, who was unable to attend the meeting, the Deputy Mayor of Yamoussoukro cordially welcomed participants to Yamoussoukro, the native village of President Felix Houphouet-Boigny, the revered father of the Ivorian nation.

24. He stressed the importance of the meeting in the light of the tendency towards liberalization in European air transport by 1993. He expressed the hope that the setting offered by Yamoussoukro would enable them to come to positive conclusions in their discussions as far as African air transport was concerned.

25. The representative of the city of Yamoussoukro also expressed his appreciation of the honour bestowed on his city by hosting the Special Conference of African Ministers of Civil Aviation, which aimed at finding appropriate solutions to the thorny problems facing African air transport.

26. To conclude, he asked participants to take decisions that would be followed up with concrete action.

27. The Minister of Transport and Communications of the United Republic of Tanzania, speaking on behalf of all the delegates, extended a vote of thanks to the Government and people of Côte d'Ivoire for the hospitality that they had enjoyed in the country. In particular, he conveyed the gratitude of the participants to His Excellency President Felix Houphouet-Boigny for allowing the meeting to be held in Côte d'Ivoire.

28. The meeting had to focus on three problems, namely the impact of deregulation on the African air transport industry, the trends in privatization and liberalization and the restrictions imposed on African aircraft which did not comply with noise standards in America and Europe. These problems, however, as they are perceived, derived essentially from the economic weakness of Africa's air transport industry. A number of previous ministerial resolutions attested to the fact that Africa was keen to form regional airlines and was prepared to integrate the smaller carriers to form stronger economic units; the time had come to take concrete action. He cautioned that the collective efforts should be preceded by political goodwill and mutual trust. In this connection, he referred to various regional and subregional initiatives where governments had fully committed themselves to fostering air transport co-operation, within the framework of institutions such as ECOWAS, SADCC, PTA, Mano River Union, etc. He concluded by asserting that a united Africa would triumph while separately it would perish in anguish.

29. In his opening address, His Excellency Aoussou Koffi, Minister of Works and Transport of Côte d'Ivoire, extended greetings of love and peace from President Felix Houphouet-Boigny to the participants.

30. He then went on to say that air transport as a factor of economic promotion and physical integration was a privileged instrument for rapprochement and understanding between men as well a determining factor in the opening up of the African continent.

31. Recounting the history of aviation, he outlined the major events and changes that had occurred between 1903 and 1987 in the field of air transport. In this respect, he emphasized the issue of deregulation which had become a fact despite the recommendations of the ICAO Special Conferences requesting countries to refrain from individually taking unilateral measures that could affect the harmony of international air transport. Prompted by the nature of deregulation and to better prepare itself against the increased competition from mega airlines, the EEC, in view of a united Europe by the year 1993, had aimed at total liberalization in the area of air transport.

32. Another aspect of change dealt with related to the computerized reservation systems, which called for huge investments and which the big American and European airlines could, individually or collectively, use to control markets.

33. In the light of these changes, the Minister stated that today airlines had no other choice but to follow the example of Europe by forming groupings to create new joint airlines, merge national airlines in operation and strengthen existing multinational airlines by admitting new members. It was only through unity that African solutions could be found to the problems linked to the operation of computerized reservation systems.

34. It was important, therefore, for Africa to organize itself so as to wholly participate in the air transport industry for the coming decades.

35. Before declaring the Special Conference of African Ministers of Civil Aviation open, the minister expressed the wish that the meeting would bring positive, constructuve and realistic results that could be implemented in the shortest possible time.

Election of the bureau and adoption of the agenda (agenda item 2)

36. The meeting elected the following bureau:

Chairman:	Côte d'Ivoire
First Vice-Chairman:	Morocco
Second Vice-Chairman:	Botswana
First Rapporteur:	Zaire
Second Rapporteur:	Ethiopia

37. The meeting also adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of the bureau and adoption of the agenda.
3. Introduction and consideration of the experts' report and the draft Declaration.

4. Any other business.
5. Adoption of the report and the Declaration.
6. Closure of the meeting.

D. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Presentation and consideration of the expert's report and the draft Declaration

38. The Chairman of the Meeting of Experts introduced the report of the meeting as well as the draft Declaration that the meeting had prepared for the Ministers' approval. He gave an account of the deliberations that had taken place during the three days of the meeting and the conclusions reached in the report. He therefore requested the Ministers to accept the report and to consider the draft Declaration.

39. The Ministers thereupon took note of the report of the Meeting of Experts and debated on the draft Declaration.

40. A number of Ministers took the floor to make statements or, generally, to participate in the debate. The issues that were raised are set out hereunder.

(a) Aircraft noise

41. Several Ministers were of the opinion that the problems that African airlines faced with regard to aircraft noise arose from the fact that the decision to apply the noise standards contained in Annex 16, chapter 2 of the Chicago Convention, had been taken unilaterally by the countries applying them and had then been imposed on African countries. It was felt that the provisions of the draft Declaration on this issue were feeble and needed to be strengthened in order to make it clear that African Governments were not prepared to accept the prohibition of their aircraft in the countries applying these standards, that they needed a dispensation of 10 to 15 years to allow them sufficient time to replace the aircraft that did not meet the noise standards in question and that they were prepared to retaliate by reciprocating the ban, if necessary.

42. A contrary view, which was upheld, was that nothing could be done to reverse the decision already taken to prohibit aircraft covered by chapter 2. What African Governments could do, however, was to have a common position on the question of the application of the standards in chapter 3, which would be discussed during the ICAO Assembly in 1989, so as to protect the interests of their airlines.

43. Furthermore, the application of the standards in chapter 2 had proved inconvenient for African airlines which were facing financial difficulties and hence were unable to replace the aircraft affected by these standards. The replacement would, however, have to be made sooner or later, as such aircraft were no longer economical to operate because of their high level of fuel consumption.

(b) Mechanism for follow-up and implementation of the Declaration's provisions

44. In view of the great importance of having an appropriate mechanism for ensuring the successful implementation of the meeting's decisions, some delegations proposed that subregional ministerial conferences should be set up for the purpose, similar to the one that has been set up in the field of maritime transport. A number of other delegations were of the opinion, however, that such a body would need to have subsidiary bodies as well as a secretariat, all of which would require financing. In view of the past experience with the financing of African intergovernmental organizations, it would not be wise to create yet another one. It would rather be better to entrust the task to ECA as provided in the draft Declaration.

45. The draft also provided for the Ministers to meet periodically but this was considered vague. It was thus agreed that it should be replaced by a statement to the effect that the Ministers would meet as often as necessary during all the phases of the airlines integration process.

46. Regarding the proposal that a co-ordination office should be created for the purpose of following up the implementation, it was decided that such a measure was not necessary since the task could equally be entrusted to ECA. It was left to ECA to carry it out in accordance with its own procedures.

47. Finally, there was the question of the need to indicate the number of subregions from which Ministers would be designated for the purpose of co-ordination and follow-up. After considerable debate during which some delegations suggested three subregions rather than the five suggested in the draft Declaration, a consensus emerged that the draft should not be amended and that it should be left to groups of countries whose airlines decided to integrate to designate from among themselves a Minister who would exercise the co-ordinating function. It was pointed out that since the countries involved in some of the current co-operative projects were found in more than one subregion (according to any of the orthodox definitions of African subregions), it would be better to leave the question flexible.

(c) Improvement of management

48. One of the most crucial questions in connection with the operations of African airlines was the interference of governments in their day-to-day management. While it was recognized that governments had the responsibility to lay down broad policy directives for state enterprises and to protect public property against wanton pillage by those seeking to enrich themselves, it was, nevertheless, essential to discourage unwarranted interference as it tended to have a negative impact on the airlines' financial performance. It was therefore necessary for African Governments to respect the principle of allowing their airlines to employ and promote their staff purely on the basis of qualifications and competence in the job.

49. It was also emphasized that, in order to improve the quality of management, personnel training had to be intensified. Furthermore, many highly

skilled technicians had been lost to African airlines because of inadequate remuneration. It was important to spare no effort to retain these technicians who were trained at great cost to governments and airlines.

(d) Financing of air transport activities

50. Considerable resources were required to finance modern equipment for African airlines, and African financing institutions ought to take the lead in providing it. The support that the African Development Bank was giving to the transport sector in general and air transport in particular was highly appreciated and the Bank was encouraged to continue it. Such support was particularly necessary for the purchase of aircraft and the establishment of maintenance centres. As the most important development financial institution in the continent, it had a special responsibility for making it possible for African aspirations to be realized. The Bank, therefore, ought to assist in the restructuring of African airlines in order to strengthen their financial performance and to assist in the establishment of a leasing company in collaboration with other financial institutions and organizations.

51. The Ministers also expressed their wish to see the African private sector become involved in the financing of air transport activities.

(e) Political support for the Conference's decisions

52. Under this issue some Ministers suggested that the Declaration required the endorsement of the summit of Heads of State and Government to become effective. It was, however, explained that any decisions taken by sectoral meetings of African Ministers were, as a matter of course, submitted to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, who took note of it. The same procedure would apply to the Declaration of the present conference.

53. What needed to be done urgently, however, was to obtain the political commitment by each African Government to the spirit and the letter of the Declaration. The Ministers were therefore requested to expedite the process in their respective countries as soon as possible upon their return so as not to lose the momentum of the decisions taken during the conference.

(f) Joint use of facilities

54. The importance of training for the improvement of management having already been recognized, an appeal was made to all governments to co-operate in the use of existing multinational training institutions. In this connection, it was recalled that African Governments had agreed to establish two multinational training centres for pilots and aircraft engineers under the auspices of AFCAC. The centre at Mvengue, Gabon, was operational while no progress had been made on the one that had been planned for Addis Ababa, although the host country had set aside the required land for it. To date, only one country had ratified the Convention relating to the establishment of the Addis Ababa centre. An appeal was therefore made to the governments that had not yet done so to ratify the Convention on the Addis Ababa centre so that it might be established without delay.

55. The Ministers also applauded financing by ADB of a study on a co-ordinat network of aircraft maintenance and overhaul centres. They expressed the support for the establishment of such centres.

(g) Facilities for Arabic interpretation

56. One delegation raised the question of the absence of Arabic interpret tion. The meeting regretted the fact that it had not been possible to provi such facilities and promised to take the necessary measures to avoid su inconvenience in the future.

(h) Traffic rights

57. Some delegations underscored the need for the liberal exchange of traff rights among African countries in order to enhance co-operation in the fie of air transport.

(i) Airline integration

58. The urgency of the need for African airlines to integrate into bigg and more efficient units was underlined. The challenge posed by the polici of other regions, especially deregulation and liberalization, made airli integration not only imperative but urgent. In view of this urgency, so delegations suggested that the timetable proposed in the draft Declarati for achieving the integration needed to be revised and made shorter. was, however, explained that the period indicated in the draft was the maxi duration and that there was a provision to the effect that it was not necessa for every integration effort to go through all the phases.

(j) Computerized reservation system (CRS)

59. The Ministers discussed the implications for African airlines of t introduction of computerized reservation systems. These systems were own by American and European airlines and worked to the disadvantage of non-own African airlines due to their biased display of information about flight The Ministers stressed the need for a common position at the forthcomi ICAO Assembly on the efforts being made by ICAO to develop a code of condu for the use of CRS. They undertook to support ICAO's efforts in this regard.

Any other business (agenda item 4)

60. No other business was raised under this agenda item.

Adoption of the report and the Declaration (agenda item 5)

61. The meeting adopted its report and the Declaration after some min amendments.

Closure of the meeting (agenda item 6)

62. The Minister of Transport of Morocco read the vote of thanks on beha of all the participants. The full text of the note is attached as an annex.

63. The Executive Secretary of ECA, on behalf of the secretariat, expressed his profound gratitude to the member States for having responded so wholeheartedly to the invitation extended to them and for having contributed to the success of the meetings. He indicated that the record attendance bore witness to the importance that the countries attached to civil aviation problems in Africa.

64. He went on to thank all the sister organizations which provided assistance to ECA and expressed the hope that they would lend similar assistance to ECA to implement the decisions.

65. To conclude, he reiterated the profound gratitude of the ECA secretariat to His Excellency Felix Houphouet-Boigny, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and to the Ivorian people for having made it possible for the meeting to be held at Yamoussoukro.

66. In his closing speech, the Minister of Works and Transport of Côte d'Ivoire indicated that the meeting had obtained the desired results thanks to the seriousness and determination of all as well as to the preparatory work done by the experts and the quality of the documents prepared by ECA. The meeting had focused awareness on the problems and culminated in a Declaration containing concrete proposals. The massive attendance was proof of the determination of all African countries to confront the effects of deregulation and liberalization.

67. The interest shown was an indication of Africa's resolve not to be isolated, but to unite its efforts for greater integration and to give top priority to ensuring that the multinational airlines to be established are better managed, by mobilizing all resources. In this connection, he welcomed the support provided by ADB and the commitment to set up a follow-up mechanism at ECA to monitor the implementation of the decisions enshrined in the Declaration.

68. To conclude, he requested all the participants to submit immediately to their Heads of State the Declaration adopted at the meeting and expressed the hope that what had been achieved would yield positive results. He finally declared the Special Conference of African Ministers of Civil Aviation closed.

Annex I

VOTE OF THANKS

The African Ministers of Civil Aviation, meeting in a Special Conference in Yamoussoukro on 6 and 7 October 1988,

Appreciating the kind hospitality extended by the Government and people of Côte d'Ivoire to the participants in this conference,

Conscious of the strong goodwill of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to contribute towards strengthening intra-African co-operation in the field of air transport,

Also appreciating the excellent arrangements made to ensure the success of this conference,

1. Express profound gratitude to the Government and people of Côte d'Ivoire for having graciously hosted this conference;

2. Express satisfaction at the outcome of the conference;

3. Express heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency Houphouet-Boigny, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire and his Government, for their long-standing commitment to the economic and political integration of Africa;

4. Urge His Excellency the Minister of Works and Transport of Côte d'Ivoire and the Executive Secretary of ECA to transmit this vote of thanks to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

YAMOUSSOUKRO DECLARATION ON A NEW AFRICAN AIR TRANSPORT POLICY

We, the African Ministers of Civil Aviation, meeting in Yamoussoukro, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, on 6 and 7 October 1988,

Considering the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act of Lagos adopted in April 1980 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity,

Considering the Declaration of General Policy in the field of Civil Aviation endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in resolution CM/Res.1047 (XXXV) of June 1980,

Considering the various resolutions adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning on air transport matters and endorsed by the ECA Conference of Ministers, in particular resolutions ECA/UNTACDA/Res.7/73 of May 1973 and ECA/UNTACDA/Res.83/84 of March 1984 on the freedoms of the air, ECA/UNTACDA/Res.74/II of May 1979 on the establishment of an African conference for regulating and approving tariffs, ECA/UNTACDA/Res.80/80 of March 1980 on the establishment of a well co-ordinated network of aircraft maintenance and overhaul centres in Africa,

Convinced that air transport is an important tool for the promotion of social and economic development in Africa and in the world,

Convinced that due to the international nature of air transport, measures taken in one part of the world are likely to have an impact on developing countries in general and on Africa in particular,

Aware of the effects of deregulation in the United States and of the consequences it may have on policies of other countries for the regulation of their air transport industry,

Gravely concerned about the potential adverse effects on the African airlines of the European air transport liberalization policies, especially the application by EEC of the treaty of Rome to air transport services and the creation of a single internal market by 1992,

Bearing in mind the fact that many aircraft owned by African airlines are obsolete and thus in need of replacement at great cost,

Conscious of the urgent need for African airlines to renew their fleets and in particular to comply with chapters 2 and 3 of Annex 16 to the Chicago Convention of 1944, concerning aircraft noise,

Considering the need for African countries to exchange traffic rights in a liberal manner in order to develop air services among themselves,

Noting the urgent need for all African airlines to market their product competitively through an unbiased computerized reservation system,

Aware that most African airlines operate at a loss and that they consume a considerable part of their countries' meagre foreign exchange resources,

Recognizing the fragility of the present air transport industry in Africa and the smallness of its market,

Recognizing the urgent need for African airlines to improve their management and to co-operate among themselves,

Guided by the will to fight against underdevelopment within the framework of a new and just international economic order,

Strongly resolved to considerably restructure African air transport in order to make it contribute more significantly to the national development of African States and to the continent's social and economic integration,

Agree to commit ourselves, individually and collectively, to promote a climate of co-operation and solidarity which is necessary for the safeguarding and development of international air transport activities in Africa, and agree by this Declaration to adopt a new air transport policy based on the following guidelines:

CO-OPERATION IN AIR TRANSPORT

A. Integration of airlines

We commit ourselves, individually and collectively, to make all the necessary efforts to achieve the integration of our airlines within a period of eight years. This integration should be done through the strengthening of existing co-operative structures and the creation of new entities either on a subregional basis, on the basis of economic groupings or on the basis of affinity. To this end, studies and consultations will be carried out immediately. The process towards the total integration of our airlines could be carried out in phases as indicated hereunder, it being understood that in certain cases it may not be necessary to go through all the phases.

Our Governments agree:

During phase I

(a) To exchange information on the value and type of equipment and facilities of each African airline, including aircraft capacity, aircraft type, training and maintenance facilities;

(b) To initiate action for the maximum use of any available capacity and in this connection investigate the possibility of designating gateway airports from which other airlines could feed their traffic with a view to improving profitability;

(c) To promote co-operation between their national airlines with a view to amalgamating them into larger, more efficient and competitive entities.

During phase II

To commit their airlines to the joint operation of compatible and international routes and to carry out jointly certain aspects of airline operations particularly in the following areas:

(a) Joint insurance;

(b) Computerized reservation system;

(c) Joint purchase of spare parts;

(d) Joint aircraft purchasing and/or leasing;

(e) Joint or common designation of flights;

(f) Common access to the market and granting of traffic rights;

(g) Consolidation of sales outlets and station handling activities including mutual representation in sales offices;

(h) Joint promotion and sale of the joint services;

(i) Revenue and cost sharing;

(j) Harmonization of existing individual networks;

(k) Training facilities;

(l) Maintenance and overhauling of equipment.

And during phase III

To achieve the complete integration of airlines, especially according to the three schemes below.

(a) Consortium: Close collaboration between the members without creating an independent legal entity;

(b) Jointly owned airlines: The partners may create a separate legal entity to manage the affairs of the partners. Under this arrangement the partners merge their operations while maintaining their individuality;

(c) Merger: The partner airlines combine to form a single entity, replacing the separate airlines that existed before the merger.

African Governments shall strive to undertake actions necessary to reach phase III as quickly as possible according to the following timetable:

Phase I:	Two years
Phase II:	Three years
Phase III:	Three years

B. Traffic rights

During the implementation of the programme for the integration of our airlines, the need to exchange traffic rights will be gradually eliminated. During the period of transition, it is necessary to show more flexibility in the granting of the fifth freedom to African airlines.

Groupings of countries co-operating in the establishment of joint multinational airlines will exchange traffic rights among themselves without restriction and shall formulate a common policy for the granting of traffic rights to carriers from outside Africa.

C. Costs and tariffs

Recognizing the relationship between tariffs and airline operating costs, African civil aviation administrations and airlines undertake to increase their technical co-operation, especially in the fields of maintenance and overhaul of aircraft, fleet planning and joint purchase activities, the use of ground equipment and collective insurance so as to minimize operating costs and thereby reduce tariffs.

Immediate action shall be taken by African States that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention on the African Air Tariff Conference (AFRATC), a forum for African airlines to study, discuss and agree on air tariffs to, from and within Africa.

IMPROVEMENT OF MANAGEMENT

The ultimate integration of our airlines should be based on the improvement of their financial situation. We undertake to improve the management of existing national airlines through a programme of intensive training aimed at making available to them manpower who are qualified and skilled in this field, competence being the sole criterion for the appointment of all staff. Every effort would be made to retain specialist staff who are hard to come by, within the airlines.

We further undertake to intensify our efforts to accord priority to the use of existing training facilities within Africa.

FINANCING OF AIR TRANSPORT ACTIVITIES

Within the framework of the integration of our airlines into larger units we shall seek to purchase equipment jointly in order to enhance our ability to acquire modern aircraft.

We shall also work towards the establishment of an African aircraft leasing and financing company so as to facilitate the acquisition of equipment by African airlines.

To this end, we call on African financing institutions, in particular ADB, and other multinational financing institutions to give high priority

to activities for the implementation of the objectives set out in this Declaration. We also encourage African private capital to get involved in the financing of air transport activities.

PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

We commit ourselves to combating the invasion of our national markets by non-African distribution systems and, to that end, we shall as a matter of urgency:

(a) Initiate studies leading to the establishment of an African joint computerized reservation system;

(b) Take the necessary measures to protect our local markets by requiring travel agents to use the computerized reservation system used by our national carriers;

(c) Pending the creation of an African joint computerized reservation system, co-operate in selecting a system offering the best terms and conditions for our airlines and shall negotiate collectively for its use;

(d) Support the current efforts of ICAO which aim at the adoption, at the international level, of a code of conduct for the unbiased use of computerized reservation system taking into account the specific interests of our airlines.

AIRCRAFT NOISE

We agree to work out a common position regarding the adoption and application of measures concerning aircraft noise restrictions in accordance with our economic situation.

We reaffirm our determination to take all the necessary steps to prevent the introduction into our countries of aircraft that are no longer in use elsewhere because of noise restrictions.

We also agree not to impose restrictions on aircraft presently registered in Africa that do not comply with current noise standards.

MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

We hereby decide to entrust the task of co-ordinating the implementation of the objectives set out in this Declaration to the Economic Commission for Africa. In this regard, we request the Economic Commission for Africa to liaise with the Organization of African Unity, the African Civil Aviation Commission, the African Airlines Association and other organizations concerned.

We commit ourselves to take all the necessary steps to facilitate the implementation of this Declaration and to instruct the Ministers of Civil Aviation of the following subregions to co-ordinate this implementation:

North Africa:	Name of country to be communicated to ECA later
East Africa:	United Republic of Tanzania
West Africa:	Côte d'Ivoire
Central Africa:	Gabon
Southern Africa:	Name of country to be communicated to ECA later.

Finally, we agree to meet as often as possible during each phase of the implementation of the decisions we have taken in order to assess progress made.

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